



Artist & Composer Study

This session's featured artist is Simone Martini. We've included six art selections for your kids and teens to use for picture study. They are:

- *Maestà*
- *St. Louis of Toulouse Crowning Robert of Anjou*
- *Petrarch's Virgil*
- *Guidoriccio da Fogliano at the Siege of Montemassi*
- *Clare of Asissi*
- *Angel of the Annunciation*

For this session, our music study will include Gregorian Chant, plus songs and instrumentals from Medieval England (featuring The Dufay Collective):

- Benedictine Monks of St Maurice and Saint Maur Clervaux, Luxembourg Playlist
- Psalm 90 & 91
- Gregoriano Monjes del Monasterio de Silos Playlist
- Miri It Is: Songs and Instrumental Music from Medieval England

Artist & Composer Study

Medieval Art & Architecture

The medieval period lasted from the fall of the Western Roman Empire (around 476 AD) to the start of the Renaissance (in 1400 AD). During this time, art and architecture changed dramatically, influenced by religion, feudal society, and cultural exchange. Different artistic styles began to develop as they reflected the values and advancements of the time.

Early Medieval Art (c. 500-1000 AD)

The Early Middle Ages, often referred to as the Dark Ages, saw the decline of large cities and the rise of monasteries and feudal communities. Art from this time was shaped by the remains of Roman culture and the growing influence of Christianity.

Byzantine Art

Byzantine art was part of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium), and featured religious themes, with gold backgrounds and detailed mosaics. Famous examples include the mosaics in the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and the icons of Saint Catherine's Monastery in Egypt.



Mosaic of Christ Pantocrator from the Hagia Sophia



Aachen Gospels, from of Charlemagne's Palatine Chapel

Insular & Carolingian Art

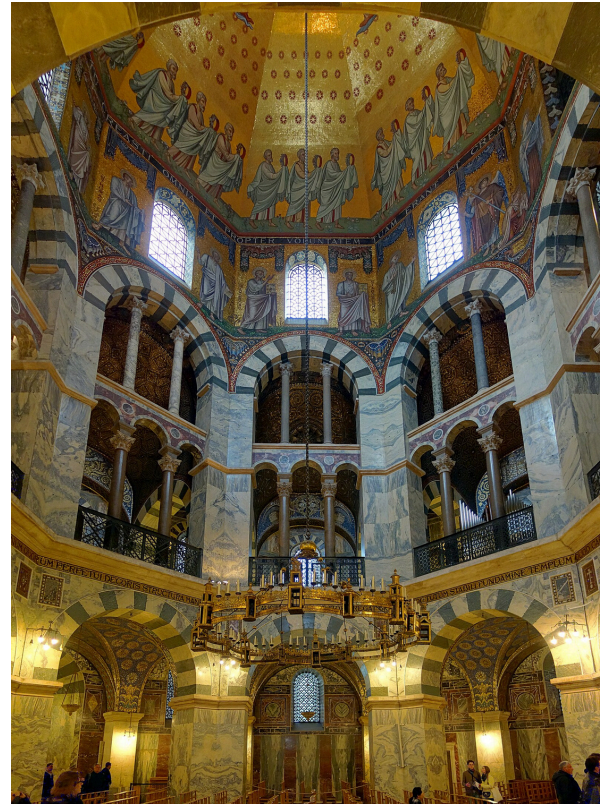
Insular and Carolingian art was found in Western Europe, where monks in Ireland and Britain created beautifully decorated books like the Book of Kells and Lindisfarne Gospels, filled with intricate designs. During the reign of Charlemagne (8th-9th centuries), classical Roman art was revived. The Coronation Gospels and the Palatine Chapel in Aachen are great examples of this mix of Roman, Christian, and local styles.

Romanesque Art & Architecture (c. 1000–1200 AD)

As Europe became more stable and monasteries grew, Romanesque art developed. This style focused on religious themes and sturdy architectural designs.

Architecture

Architecture was an art form all on its own. Romanesque churches and abbeys had thick stone walls, rounded arches, and small windows, giving them a fortress-like appearance. Notable examples include the Abbey of Cluny, the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and Durham Cathedral, which introduced early Gothic elements.



Palatine Chapel



Pórtico da Gloria, Santiago Cathedral

Sculpture & Painting

Sculpture and painting became more prominent. Church entrances were decorated with relief sculptures showing biblical scenes, often with dramatic expressions to teach and inspire people. Frescoes and illuminated manuscripts were also popular, with vivid depictions of saints, Bible stories, and mythical creatures.

Gothic Art & Architecture (c. 12th–15th Century)

Gothic architecture evolved from the Romanesque style and focused on height, light, and intricate details. This period reflected the growing influence of the Church and the rise of cities throughout medieval Europe.



Windows of Troyes Cathedral

Sculpture & Stained Glass

Sculptures and stained glass were very common throughout this time. Gothic sculptures became more realistic, showing detailed clothing and facial expressions. Stained-glass windows, such as those in Sainte-Chapelle and the Rose Window of Chartres, used vibrant colors to tell biblical stories, filling church interiors with colorful light.

Architectural Innovations

Architectural innovations affected how everything was built. Gothic cathedrals had pointed arches, ribbed vaults, and flying buttresses, which allowed for taller buildings with large stained-glass windows. Famous examples include Notre-Dame in Paris, Chartres Cathedral, and Reims Cathedral.



Notre Dame Cathedral



Ghent Altarpiece, St. Bavo's Cathedral

Painting and Altarpieces

Painting and altarpieces were marked by artists experimenting with depth and perspective as they drew closer to the Renaissance. Gothic panel paintings and altarpieces by artists like Giotto and Duccio showed more human emotion and realism, bridging medieval and Renaissance art.

Notable Medieval Artists

While most medieval art was created by anonymous artists in monasteries and guilds, some individuals became well-known, especially toward the late medieval period. Here are a few important figures who played a key role in shaping European art and paving the way for the Renaissance.

Early Medieval Artists (Byzantine & Insular Art)

- **Theophanes the Greek** (c. 1340-1410) - A Byzantine artist who influenced early Russian religious painting.
- **Eadfrith of Lindisfarne** (late 7th - early 8th century) - Created the Lindisfarne Gospels, a masterpiece of Insular manuscript decoration.

Carolingian & Ottonian Artists

- **Gero of Cologne** (10th century) - Created the Gero Crucifix, one of the first large wooden sculptures of Christ.
- **Master of the Utrecht Psalter** (9th century) - An unknown artist or group responsible for the Utrecht Psalter, an influential Carolingian manuscript.

Romanesque Artists

- **Benedetto Antelami** (c. 1150-1230) - An Italian sculptor and architect known for the Parma Baptistery.
- **Master Hugo** (fl. 1130-1150) - An English artist who illuminated the Bury Bible.

Gothic Artists

- **Giotto di Bondone** (c. 1267-1337) - A painter whose frescoes in the Arena Chapel in Italy showed early use of realism and perspective.
- **Duccio di Buoninsegna** (c. 1255-1319) - A Siennese artist known for the Maestà Altarpiece.
- **Simone Martini** (c. 1284-1344) - A Gothic painter famous for his Annunciation and elegant, detailed artwork.
- **Limbourg Brothers** (fl. 1400-1416) - Known for their illuminated manuscript Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry, an example of International Gothic style.

Simone Martini

c. 1284 – July 1344



Simone Martini was born around 1284 in Siena, Italy, a city famous for its rich artistic culture and deep religious traditions. Although not much is known about his childhood, historians believe he trained under Duccio di Buoninsegna, one of the most important painters of his time.

Duccio's influence can be seen in Martini's elegant lines, vibrant colors, and the use of gold leaf, which gave his paintings a luminous, almost heavenly quality. At the time, Siena was competing with nearby Florence as a center of art and culture, creating an exciting and inspiring environment for young artists like Martini to develop their skills.

Martini became one of the most important artists of the International Gothic style, which was known for its graceful figures, intricate details, and refined beauty. His paintings were different from the stiff and symbolic artwork that had been common in earlier medieval times. Instead, Martini brought a greater sense of life and movement to his work. His ability to combine elements from Byzantine art, such as rich colors and religious symbolism, with the delicate and detailed approach of the Gothic style, made him one of the most sought-after painters of his era.

Some of his most famous works include the "Maestà," a large fresco in Siena's town hall, which depicts the Virgin Mary surrounded by angels and saints, and the "Annunciation with St. Margaret and St. Ansanus," an altarpiece that captures the moment the angel Gabriel tells Mary she will give birth to Jesus.

The latter painting is particularly admired for the expressive emotion on Mary's face and the intricate gold patterns that decorate the scene. Another well-known work, "St. Louis of Toulouse Crowning Robert of Anjou," showcases Martini's ability to paint luxurious fabrics and detailed facial expressions, making his subjects appear almost real.

Later in life, Martini moved to Avignon, France, where he worked for the Papal court. At the time, Avignon was an important artistic and political center, and this move exposed him to French Gothic influences, which made his paintings even more elegant and refined. He continued to paint in Avignon until his death in 1344.

Simone Martini's impact on art lasted long beyond his lifetime. He helped bridge the gap between medieval art and the early Renaissance by introducing more realism, emotional depth, and a greater sense of space in his paintings. His influence can be seen in later artists, such as Gentile da Fabriano and Fra Angelico, who carried his ideas into the next era of European art. Today, his works remain some of the finest examples of the International Gothic style, admired for their beauty, detail, and spiritual depth.



Maestà, (1315)



Maestà, (1315) DETAIL



St. Louis of Toulouse Crowning Robert of Anjou (1317)



Ytala pelagos tellus alis alma poetas!
Sed tibi grecorum dedit hic attingere metas.

Seruus altoque regens archana maronis.
ut patiantur vnicuique pastoribus atque colonis.

Petrarch's Virgil (1336)



Guidoriccio da Fogliano at the Siege of Montemassi (1328)



Guidoriccio da Fogliano at the Siege of Montemassi (1328) DETAIL



Clare of Assisi (1320)



Angel of the Annunciation (1333)



Angel of the Annunciation (1333) DETAIL

Picture Study

Title: _____

Date Created: _____

Art Mediums Used: _____

Further Study: _____

Use the box to draw a picture inspired by this artwork.

